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JAMAICA: THE PEARL OF THE ANTILLES.



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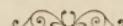
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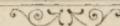
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JAMAICA:

THE PEARL OF THE ANTILLES.



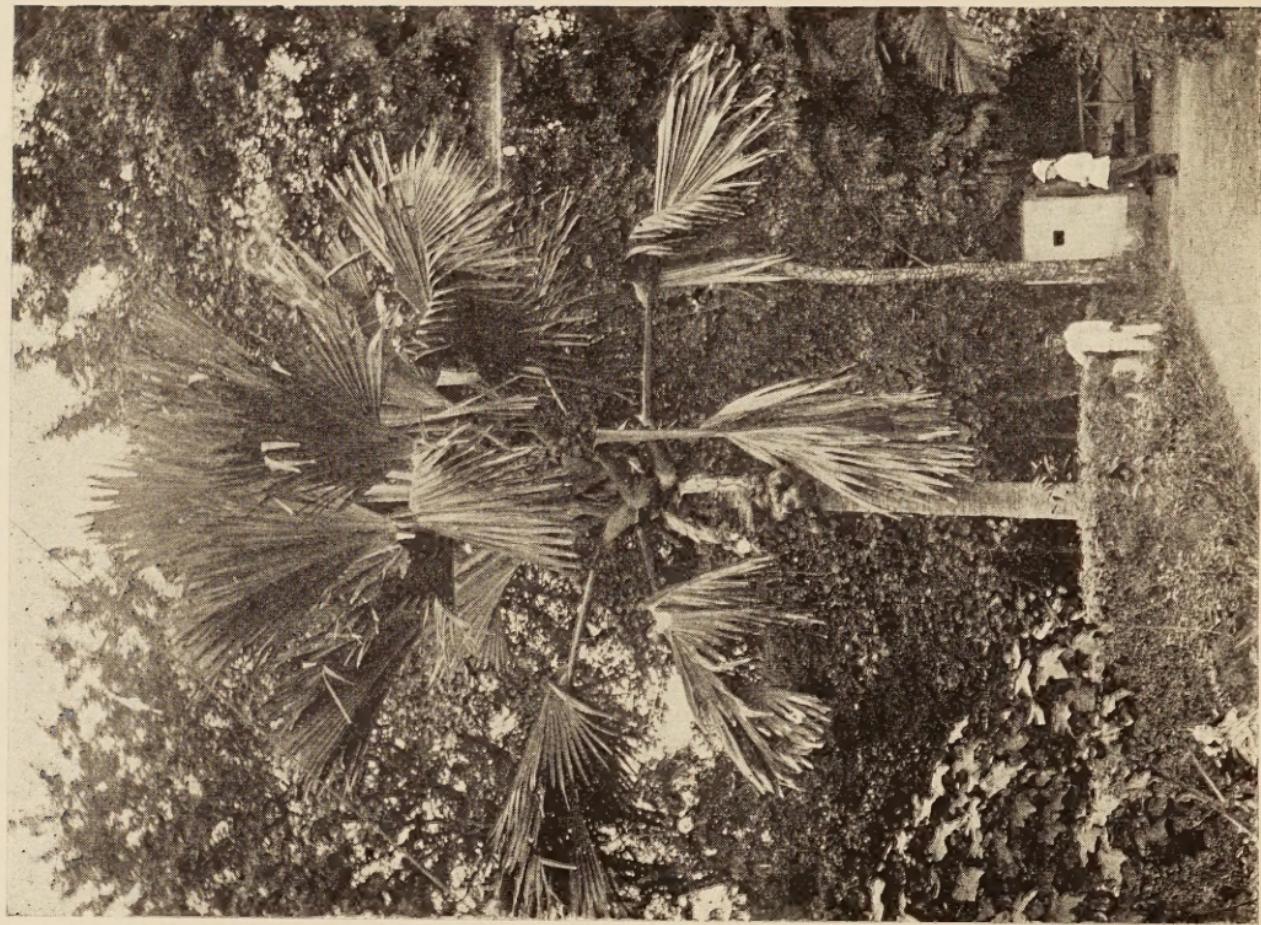
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COLONIAL AND CONTINENTAL CHURCH SOCIETY,
9, SERJEANTS' INN, FLEET STREET, LONDON, E.C.

Secretary—REV. CANON HURST, D.D.

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PALM TREES.

JAMAICA:

The Pearl of the Antilles.

THE connection of the Island of Jamaica with Great Britain began in the year 1655, when the navy succeeded in wresting it from the Spanish power, which up to that time had been practically supreme in the West Indies. The Spaniards had treated the original Indian inhabitants with great brutality, and the only remains of Spanish occupation are to be found in a small colony in the mountains, descendants from the Spanish-Indian half-castes.

The English plantation owners imported a large number of negro slaves from Western Africa to do the necessary cultivation of the soil, and on the whole they appear to have treated them very well. Still the negroes remained, in the most limited sense, "hewers of wood and drawers of water," and were totally without any educational advantages.

In 1834 came the general emancipation of the slaves, and, although very many of the negroes remained upon the pens (estates) of their former owners, the unfitness



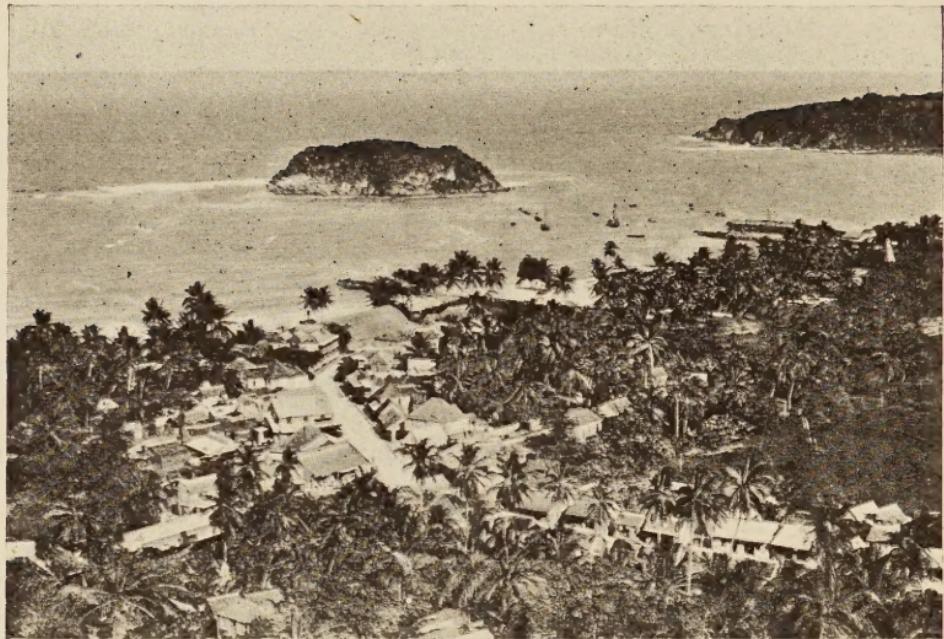
SUGAR CANE CUTTERS, JAMAICA.

of an ignorant negro population for unlimited freedom and the franchise gradually culminated in the disastrous negro riots of 1865. From the terrible chastisement inflicted upon the rioters by the Governor (Eyre), however, a new negro life seems to have sprung up, with the result that to-day a remarkable contrast is to be seen between the coloured population of Jamaica and the coloured population of the Southern States of America. For, in respect for law—loyalty to authority—reasonable regard for a superior white race—reverence for religion and purity of life and conduct, everything is most decidedly in favour of the coloured race of Jamaica.

The island is about 150 miles long, 50 miles wide, with an area of 6,400 square miles, or rather more than the size of Yorkshire.

A heavy range of mountains forms the backbone of Jamaica, the Blue Mountains rising to 7,000 feet in height and giving a great variety to the climate. Around the low-lying coast line even the wash of the ocean does not do away with the sweltering torrid conditions, whereas the elevations on the mountains bring you at once into a perfect temperate zone, and each year is adding to their reputation as health resorts for invalids from Canada and the United States. The whole of the plains are laid out in great estates or "pens," and produce sugar, logwood, fruit, cocoanuts, coffee, cocoa, and all kinds of spices. The negroes grow immense quantities of bananas in their "grounds," and a common sight is a procession of women, each carrying their bunch of bananas on their head to the nearest seaport for export by sea.

For many years the productive cane fields of Jamaica had supplied the English market with tons of the best of sugar. The majority of the white plantation owners and, of course, a multitude of coloured workers, were entirely dependent on this industry. When, however, the German government began to pay a bounty in order to encourage the production of beetroot sugar, the cane sugar of Jamaica was driven from the English markets and the industry was practically destroyed. The payment



PORT MARIA, JAMAICA.

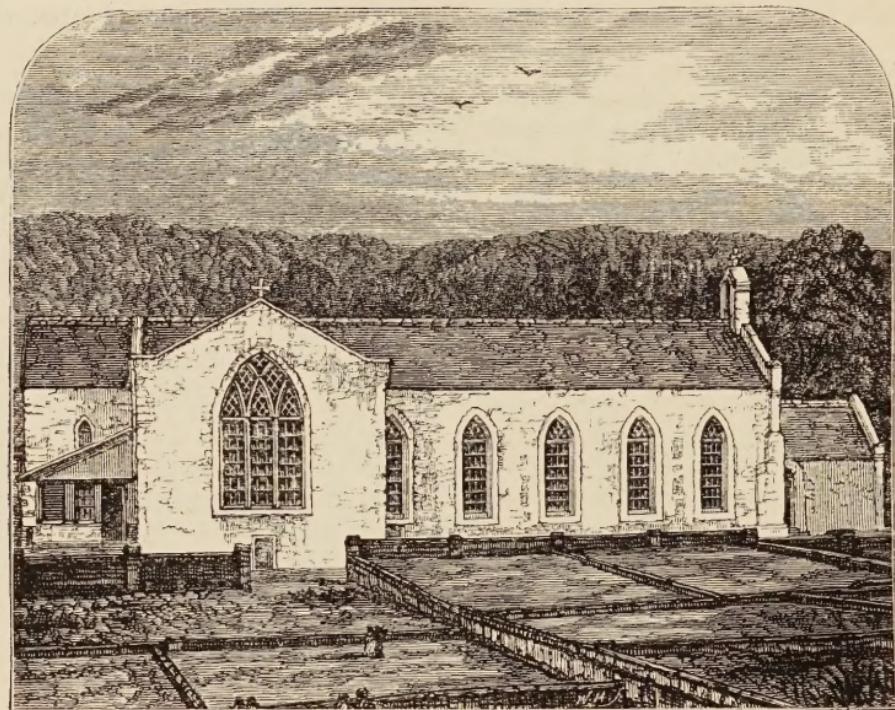
of sugar bounty by Continental governments was a fine thing for English confectioners and preserve makers, but it brought ruin to Jamaican plantation owners, and idleness, followed by keen distress, to their thousands of coloured labourers.

This, of course, gave another long-drawn-out set-back to the work of the Church, which was only just recovering from the effects of disestablishment and disendowment. In later years the enormous consumption of fruit by the people of the United States caused American buyers to look to the wonderful capabilities of Jamaica for fruit growing, with the result that several towns on the north shore have become centres for collecting and forwarding to the United States by fast steamers a large supply of bananas, grape fruit, oranges, lemons, and limes. Port Maria owes its importance to the growth of this trade, which will largely compensate, at least in certain districts, for the loss of the cane sugar industry.

The church buildings all over the island are, as a rule, large and solidly built of stone, though austere plain in their absence of finish and decorations.

This is, of course, for economic reasons. A solid stone wall and heavy roof must be put up if the building is to stand equatorial rains and gales. Expensive finish and elaborations cannot be thought of when the seats provided will not hold half those who want to come to church. The reply made to one of the C. & C. C. S. missionaries, when expostulating with a coloured man for being absent from church, was: "Hi! parson, but what de use fo me go to church, when me no able get seat." Needless to say he was more anxious to cover up his fault than to make the most of what there was provided. The writer has seen scores of people unable to get into this very church (St. Alban's, Santa Cruz Mountains) standing outside the large windows (swung open upon a central pivot) joining heartily in the services, and listening patiently and reverently throughout the sermon.

Many of these really imposing churches (in size and strength) have been reared



ST. ALBAN'S CHURCH, SANTA CRUZ MOUNTAINS.

by most self-denying efforts on the part of both missionary and people. To obviate the difficulty of having a church which only held 300 people in a district where 4,000 ought to belong to it, the C. & C. C. S. missionary in charge determined to enlarge the church at once to more than double its size. The work was commenced, but the missionary had to be not only the architect, but chief mason, working with trowel and hammer, and chief carpenter, marking mortises, &c., day after day, leaving home early in the morning and not returning till late at night. And all this with Sunday duties, visitation of the sick, day schools, and another church 12 miles away to look after. But the work was finished, and a fine large church (costing about £700, exclusive of more than £100 worth of free labour given by the coloured people) was opened for service with only a debt of £40 remaining on it.

Another C. & C. C. S. agent describes the building of a new church to hold 500 "where there had not even been a mission station before. The building was no mean structure—the walls were of stone, 2 ft. thick, with a pitch-pine roof, having a span of 40 ft. The church was finished after three years of labour at a cost of over £1,000 in cash, of which not more than £200 was received from outside sources." Friends and supporters of the C. & C. C. S. in England are not likely to withhold their sympathetic help when such local self-help and self-denial is evidenced.

An English clergyman spending some time in Jamaica, in a letter written home to England, said: "Jamaicans are, as a rule, sensible of their many privileges under the glorious Gospel. I have travelled in many countries, both in the temperate and torrid zones, but never yet in one where the natives of that country flocked to God's house as they do here."

The coloured people are very careful about the cleanliness of their clothing. Everything must be thoroughly washed and starched, or they will not be seen going into church. Should the clergyman on his Monday rounds call such an one



JAMAICAN NEGROES AND HOUSES.

to account for absence from church, the reply would probably be: "Hi! parson, but me wa'nt prepared."

Hundreds go down the mountains to their church by the same old rock steps or paths their fathers used in slavery days. These are very narrow, and hedged by thorny bushes, which seriously detract from the whiteness and stiffness of the Sunday starched dresses. So the week-day clothes are worn to some secluded spot near the church, where the clean clothes are taken from a carefully wrapped parcel carried on top of the head, the old clothes are hidden under a bush, and soon everything is ready for church.

Boots are very seldom worn by the poorer class of negroes during the week, consequently they suffer a good deal in putting them on for service; yet few would be seen going to church without them, even though they may be quietly slipped off "while the parson is a-preaching."

Many of the older people, born in and immediately after slavery days, do not possess the educational advantages found very generally among the younger people. The ordinary parts of the service they mostly know by heart. But what about the Psalms and Lessons? Half the coloured people cannot read, said a Jamaican clergyman to a lately landed Englishman. But the tremendous volume of sound from fully 500 rich, full voices reading the alternate verse in the Psalms for the day caused the new-comer to doubt the statement until he found out next day "that the older people during the week previously had made the children read over the Psalms and Lessons for the coming Sunday until they also knew them by heart."

A service in a Jamaican church away back in the mountains is a revelation to a new-comer. Filled to the door with a congregation as black as black can be, with the few white people of the district sitting in the two or three front pews, they crowd their churches with an intelligent, reverent and attentive body of hearty worshippers.



ST. MARK'S CHURCH, BROWNSTOWN.

And what singing of the hymns and chants! The time and pointing might not be altogether the thing for Westminster Abbey, but the harmony and the heartiness will leave an impression of sincerity and devotion that years of absence will not efface. In these mountain churches they can have but one service on the Sunday, and many of the people have walked miles down the mountain paths to attend it. So they want it all. The parson begins with morning prayers to the end of *all* the Collects; then the Litany, followed sometimes by a break of ten minutes, after which the Communion service and a *good long sermon* is expected. When church service is ended most of the adults will remain for the Sunday school, which always follows after a short interval. It is a very picturesque sight to see these coloured congregations gathering in by scores towards the church, all scrupulously clean, and mostly carrying upon their heads a small package wrapped in a white towel; this contains Bible, prayer-book and hymn book, and all are thoroughly used throughout the service.

The Church of England in Jamaica ceased to be connected with the great English missionary societies at the time when the British and Jamaican Governments undertook to make financial provision for the maintenance of an increased number of clergy on the establishment after the emancipation of all slaves. But this did not last very long, and in 1870 the Church was disestablished in many places, under circumstances of severe hardship.

To help tide over the crisis, the present Archbishop and three other clergy came to England in connection with the C. & C. C. S., and laid the case before English congregations, with the result that an appropriation was made from the funds of the Society, which has since been maintained from year to year, and has been of immense help to the Church in Jamaica. From time to time the agents, assisted by the C. & C. C. S., have been moved on to places where the work of the Church needed strengthening and extending, and so the help has been an ever-fresh source of growth and expansion.



BANANA CARRIERS.

The C. & C. C. S. has given substantial help to Jamaica since the Government grants were withdrawn from that Island in 1870, when the Church was thrown upon her own resources. Contributors to the Society's funds in England have every reason to be satisfied with the good which has resulted from grants made to Jamaica at a time when stations were in great danger of being abandoned and congregations scattered, but which through timely help have become consolidated thriving parishes, able in turn to extend their missionary operations to outlying districts.

The Archbishop of the West Indies recently gave the following interesting particulars in regard to Jamaica and to the work of the Church there:—"In my own diocese of Jamaica," he said, "we have a population of three-quarters of a million. Of these about 14,500 are white people, and the rest are of various nationalities and mixed races, including about 600,000 blacks, who are the descendants of slaves. The Church of England in Jamaica has now about 100 clergymen, 150 catechists, many voluntary lay readers, and more than 40,000 communicants. Of these communicants, though I am far from saying that all are leading pure and faultless lives, yet none is a notorious evil liver, and all are being trained in a godly Church discipline. We also have 106 consecrated churches, 150 school-chapels, 300 primary schools for the working classes, and very considerable educational work among other sections of the population, including some high schools that are mainly supported by the government of the colony. The work of the Church is mainly supported by the gifts of our own people. From these same contributions of our own Jamaica people we are endeavouring to keep up with efficiency all our institutions and efforts. I know the imperfection of some of them, but I can venture to say that there has been going on in Jamaica a great spiritual, intellectual, and moral change."

A missionary who has been to Jamaica for many years says: "Morally and socially our people advance but slowly, yet the present state of things is wonderful when compared with what it was fifty years ago, and the Colonial and Continental

Church Society may rejoice that it has had a share in this great work of progress and improvement."

If it is true that there must be *some* fire where there is *much* smoke, then it is also true that there must be a good deal of real religion when a C. & C. C. S. missionary can write the following:—"During last year a confirmation was held with us by the Assistant Bishop of the diocese, when 237 persons, of whom 100 were males, were (after a course of weekly preparation from February to June) presented for the laying-on of hands. The weather at the time was unusually wet—for us, in the Santa Cruz mountains, remarkably so—and from the arrival of the Bishop on Thursday afternoon, throughout the whole of Friday and Saturday, the rain came down, and Sunday morning was little better, though there were occasional breaks from about 8 a.m. (A Jamaica rain needs to be seen to be understood, and the coloured people are very much averse to getting wet owing to malarial fever.) Under such circumstances it seemed hopeless to expect that any large number of the candidates would appear, especially when it is remembered that the roads in many places were under water. However, I started off to church, leaving the Bishop to follow in a closed carriage, when, to our surprise, it was found that, with one exception, all the candidates were in their places, and a considerable congregation assembled besides. A very affecting service followed, the Bishop delivering a most earnest address from the 3rd chapter of St. John."

G. E. L.

Colonial & Continental Church Society.

ESTABLISHED 1823.

INCORPORATED 1887.

Patron: HER MOST GRACIOUS MAJESTY THE QUEEN.

THE object of the Society is to carry the ministrations of the Gospel of Christ to our fellow-countrymen in the Colonies and on the Continent.

The Society employs 160 Clergymen, and 120 Catechists, Schoolmasters and Teachers in the Colonies.

These are working in Newfoundland, in Canada, in the West Indies, in the East Indies, in Australia, in South Africa, in New Zealand, in the Diocese of Mauritius, and in British Honduras.

Full salaries are not paid by the Society, but grants are made to supplement local contributions.

Through such timely help, Missionaries are secured, and parishes gradually become self-supporting.

The income of the Society, including what is raised and expended in the Colonies, varies from £40,000 to £45,000.

The Society depends chiefly on offertories in Churches, and on contributions from Associations, paid through the Hon. Secretaries.

Subscriptions and Donations paid direct to the Head Office, and not through the Associations, average only about £2,000. These ought to be one of the most reliable sources of income, and, in view of the increasing responsibility by the expansion of the Empire, the **Committee are most anxious that they should be at least doubled.**



NEWNHAM & COWELL, 75 CHISWELL STREET, E.C.